DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 243 177 EA 016 654

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TITLE The Politics of School Board Turnover: An Exploratory Study.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Ithaca. School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell Univ.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 83
GRANT NIE-G-78-0080
NOTE 24p.; In: Consensus and Power in School Organizations. Final Report (EA 016 651).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Organization; *Board Administrator Relationship; Board of Education Policy; *Board of Education Role; *Boards of Education; Educational Administration; Factor Analysis; Labor Relations; *Occupational Mobility; Organizational Theories; *Politics of Education; Power Structure; Public Schools
IDENTIFIERS Coalitions; New York; *Political Analysis

ABSTRACT

Because research on job characteristics as predictors of turnover is of debatable relevance to the study of school board turnover, the research reported here examines the impact of variables capable of capturing the political context. In a survey including data from 263 board members from 83 school districts in New York State, the dependent variable was turnover, measured by expressed intent not to run for another term of office. In the first stage of analysis, a large number of variables were correlated with the dependent variable. The 32 variables emerging as significant were carried to the second stage and subjected to a principal factoring with varimax rotation. True factor scales were then created for each of 11 factors that became the independent variables for the third stage of analysis. In this stage, the factor scales were regressed onto the dependent variable to identify seven primary predictors of school board turnover. Of the seven significant patterns of activity, administrative deprivation of influence, length of time on board, and agreement with current board predicted board turnover. Factors predicting running for reelection were favoring more union involvement, feeling that teachers had usurped authority over control issues, a pro-administration attitude, and miscellaneous items expressing agreement or discontent with different groups in the district. (MJL)

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THE POLITICS OF SCHOOL BOARD TURNOVER: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY[1]

by

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This material is based on work supported by the National Institute of Education under Grant number NIE G 78 0080, Samuel B. Bacharach, principal investigator. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute or the Department of Education.

In: Consensus and Power in School Organizations

EA 016 654

Of all the forces that buffet school districts, one of the most problematic is turnover on the school board. The potential for board turnover to factionalize the school board or to alter the minority status of an already existing faction can have a major impact on the administration of a district.[2] Despite its importance, there has been little research on school board turnover. Although the study of turnover in organizations has generated a substantial volume of literature,[3] many of the key variables in this research (e.g., paid positions, opportunity for promotions, alternative job opportunities) make its applicability to the study of board turnover questionable. Most importantly, the prior research on turnover does not account for what we feel is the critical aspect of school board turnover, namely the fact that it is part of a political process.[4] In this paper, we will use a political perspective to examine school board turnover. We will try to identify basic types of school board members and look at the affect of these characterizations on board turnover.

The Study of Turnover

Traditionally, there have been two areas which have dealt with the study of turnover. One is the direct study of turnover, while the other is the study of organizational commitment in which turnover is seen as a primary consequence of low commitment. Since these areas overlap both conceptually and empirically, for our purposes they may be treated as a single entity.[5]

Drawing on the literature related to turnover and commitment, two broad classes of antecedants may be identified. The first uses an exchange framework to determine the perceived utility of the position occupied.[6] Under this framework, the employee is assumed to make a comparison between his/her present position and some alternative position. Variables which are

likely to play a particularly important role in this comparison are pay and promotional opportunities. If the alternative position is seen as offering better pay and/or better promotional opportunities, the employee is more likely to leave their current position. Thus the key variables in an exchange approach are pay, promotional opportunities, and the presence of alternative job opportunities. Insofar as tenure in a position generally enhances the value of one's current job, tenure is also an important variable in this approach.[7]

What is striking about these variables is the fact that they are almost totally inapplicable to the study of school board turnover. School board members are volunteers, therefore the question of pay does not arise (although the lack of pay for what is often a demanding position may be a factor in board turnover). While one may aspire to specific offices on the board, strictly speaking all board members are equal, so there are no promotional opportunities per se. Given the lack of pay and promotional opportunities, it is not clear what benefits accrue from tenure on a school board, other than experience. The lack of tangible material rewards also makes the question of comparison alternatives problematic. This is not to say that some semblance of an exchange or utility framework cannot be applied to the problem of school board turnover, just that the variables which have been used to study turnover in other positions are inappropriate for this purpose. Rather than focus on the material benefits which are assumed to be the basis of self-interest in most exchange models, we believe it is necessary to concentrate on the political motivations of school board members, for it is in those motivations (in terms of their goal or purpose for serving on the board) that the basis of their self-interest will be found.

Consideration of the political motivations of school board members requires that one address the second class of antecedants that can be

identified in the commitment and turnover literature, namely those dealing with an employee's expectations and work experience.[8] Basically, this approach assumes that employees enter an organization with certain expectations about the positions they were hired to fill. Once on the job, the degree to which their actual work experience matches their expectations will determine their propensity to leave the organization. Granted, it would be possible to merge this approach with the exchange approach by looking at the expectations an employee develops regarding material benefits such as pay and promotional opportunities. In general, however, those studying the affect of expectations and work experience have been more concerned with the psychological aspects of work such as the development of work norms and the employees sense of identity on the job. Variables related to job characteristics have received a great deal of emphasis in investigating these aspects of work, the assumption being that certain characteristics (e.g., autonomy, participation, lack of routinization) will provide a positive work experience, enhancing the employee's sense of competence and identity, and thereby decreasing the likelihood of turnover.[9]

Despite the relative success researchers have had in isolating job characteristics as predictors of turnover, the relevance of this research to the study of board turnover is debatable.[10] If, as argued above, people run for the board with a set of implicit or explicit goals for the school system, then it seems likely that their ability to achieve these goals in practice would be a critical factor impacting on board turnover. Although job characteristics may have an affect on goal achievement and therefore indirectly on turnover,[11] the recognition of the political aspects of the position of a school board member would suggest that it is the political ability of the board member that is the crucial factor determining the degree of goal achievement.

Thus while the literature on turnover identifies two approaches to the study of turnover, the empirical focus of these approaches as used in past research is inappropriate to the study of school board turnover. In order for either the exchange/utility approach or the expectations/experience approach to be relevant to the examination of board turnover, they must shed their concerns with material benefits and personal growth, respectively, and focus instead on the political context in which a school board member's utilities, expectations, and experiences are developed and maintained.

The School Board as a Political Entity

Consideration of the political context of school board activity requires that we conceptualize the school district as a political system. This involves: 1) seeing both internal and external relations as part of the political process; 2) conceiving of participants as political actors with their own needs, objectives, and strategies to achieve these objectives; 3) recognizing that coalitions of actors emerge in organizations, identify collective objectives, and identify strategies to achieve their objectives; 4) realizing that actions are constrained by organizational structures, technologies and ideologies; and 5) viewing decision-making processes as the primary arena for political activity.[12] Utilizing this conceptualization of school districts as political systems, it is possible to reconsider the role both the exchange/utility approach and the expectation/experience approach may play in the study of school board turnover.

The primary resource available to the school board member is the power of legitimation. By law, the school board has final authority over much of school district policy. Although this power resides in the entire board, the individual board member, by virtue of his/her vote, shares in that legitimacy. It is this ability to vote that is the basic resource a board member has to exchange. The ability of a board member to use this resource may

vary. Those who consider the board as a rubber stamp for the administration would probably argue there is little to be gained from an examination of the political ability of a board member. Others, who are more willing to accept the authority of the board, recognize that board members respond to particular issues, and that in this responsiveness lies the roots of politics.[13] Board members will use their vote in an attempt to pass issues which they support. They may also be willing to trade their vote on issues for which they have little feeling in exchange for another board member's vote on an issue they do consider important, or for information or expertise from teachers or the administration which would support an issue they consider important, or for the support of community groups which would insure their survival on the board. The point is that the exchange in which board members engage, and any utility which may result, is at its heart a political process steeped in self-interest and coalition formation around specific issues. In line with the previous literature on turnover, we hypothesize that the ability of a board member to engage in such exchanges will affect his/her turnover on the board.

Of course, not all issues will be susceptible to exchanges. Only those which are perceived as related to a board member's self-interest are likely to generate political manuvering. Identifying a board member's self-interest seems likely to be directly related to his/her expectations concerning their membership on the board. Most board members assume their position with some vision of what they would like the school district to be. This vision or orientation may be liberal or conservative, it may involve curriculum or finance.[14] Whatever its content, specific issues which arise will be assessed in terms of their relation to this vision. In turn, the board member's actual experience in trying to enact this vision through specific decisions will determine the degree to which these

expectations are met. As noted above, an individual's success will be dependent in part on their political ability to engage in exchange relationships. Failure to achieve these expectations is likely to result in turnover.

Thus unlike much of the previous research which has been able to separate the exchange/utility approach from the expectations experience, the political aspects of board membership leads to an integration of these perspectives. An investigation of board turnover requires the use of variables capable of capturing the political process, i.e., it must focus on specific issues, the formation of coalitions, and the achievement of expectations. The research reported here is a preliminary attempt to examine the impact of such variables on school board turnover.

METHOD

Sample

This report is based on survey data collected in 83 school districts in New York State. These districts are a random sample stratified according to geographic location, size, wealth of the district, and district expenditures. Four regions in New York State were utilized for geographic location. The sample included 30 districts from the Binghamton-Elmira region; 14 districts in the Rochester region; 22 districts in the Syracuse region; and 17 districts in the Elmsford region. Average daily attendance in K-12 for each district was used as an indication of size. The average size of our sample is 3,128. The size of the districts ranges from a low of 277 to a high of 12,205. Assessed valuation was employed as a measure of district wealth. The average assessed valuation per pupil in our sample is $19,517; the range is from a low of $4,265 to a high of $52,761. Expenditures are indexed by the total general and federal aid expenditures for a district. The average per pupil expenditures goes from a low of $1,678 to a high of $4,101.

For each district, the superintendent, central office administrative assistants, school board members, teachers in the largest elementary school and largest high school, and the principals of those schools received questionnaires. The data reported here are based on responses obtained from 263 school board members (response rate = 48%).

Dependent Variable

Ideally, the study of turnover would involve the use of objective indices of turnover. A person present at one point in time and absent at another would be classified as one case of turnover. Unfortunately, this ideal case has practical limitations. It requires the use of either a longitudinal design or of retrospective accounts collected from people who have left the organization. The former is expensive, requires time, and risks the possibility of encountering no cases of turnover, while the latter raises serious questions regarding the validity of retrospective accounts, particularly where one is concerned with identifying antecedant predictors of turnover. The most common solution to these difficulties involves the utilization of measures of intent to leave the organization. Although this is not a perfect measure, research indicates that intent to leave is highly correlated with actual turnover.[15] Further it is substantially easier to collect data using this measure. Accordingly, we employed a measure of intent to leave as our measure of turnover. Specifically, board members were asked, "when your present term of office is up, do you currently anticipate running for another term?" Responses were coded on a scale of 1 = no, 2 = don't know, and 3 = yes. The mean for our sample was 1.89, with a high of 3 and a low of 1, and a standard deviation equal to .84.

Independent Variables and Analysis

Since this was considered an exporatory study with little or no research

to guide the selection of variables, a somewhat untraditional approach was taken to the creation and analysis of independent variables. A three stage process was used. In the first stage, the basis concepts of politics in organizations were used to generate a large set of independent variables. These variables were then correlated with the dependent variable. Only those which emerged as significant were carried on to the second stage. In the second stage, the remaining variables were subjected to a principal factoring with varimax rotation. True factor scales were then created for each factor and these became the independent variables for the final stage of analysis. In the last stage, the factor scales were regressed onto the dependent variable to identify the primary predictors of school board turnover.

STAGE 1: As noted earlier, the set of independent variables must take account of coalitions, specific issues, and the fulfillment of expectations. In regards to coalitions, four different interest groups may be identified in school districts: the school board, the administration, the teachers, and the community.[16] An individual board member may form a coalition with any of these groups. Further, the pressure to form a coalition with one of these groups may begin before a board member decides to run for office and continue once s/he is elected. The survey used contained three sets of items which allow us to assess the degree of pressure felt by members from various groups at different stages of their "careers" as board members. The first set asked members, "when first making your decision to run for election to the school board, how important were each of the following in reaching a decision?" There followed a list of items such as encouragement from board members, encouragement from public citizens groups, encouragement from professional school personnel, encouragement from friends and neighbors, and encouragement from government and political

figures, which were to be rated on a scale of 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important). The second set asked respondents, "When you first served on the school board, how useful were the following people, groups, or events in filling you in on how the school district 'really' works?" This was followed by a list of positions in the district which included roles from each of the four interest groups identified above. Each role was rated on a scale of 1 (very useful) to 5 (had no contact). The third set required board members to indicate "how often...the following groups or people make demands on you?" This was followed by a list of positions similar to that in the second set of questions, each of which was rated on a scale of 1 (seldom or never) to 4 (almost always). Insofar as the potential for coalitions with the community will vary with the diversity, stability, and predictability of the local environment, questions related to these factors were included in our preliminary analysis.[17]

Coalition formation generally occurs around specific issues, with the choice of a coalition partner guided by ideological agreement or by the other party's degree of power.[18] The questionnaire contained a series of items on school district decision making which allow us to assess these possibilities. Each set of items in the section on decision-making contained a list of 23 specific decisions which can be grouped into nine general categories of issues: district, monetary, negotiations, daily labor relations, personnel, control, classroom, testing, and special programs/ community relations. Three sets of items were used in the preliminary analysis. The first provided respondents with a list of roles in the district and asked them to indicate who had authority over each issue. From this, it is possible to construct a measure of each interest group's perceived authority over each category of issues.[19] The second set of items required respondents to indicate how much influence each role had over each issue.

as well as how much influence they felt each role should have. A measure of decisional deprivation for each group in each issue area was constructed by subtracting the amount of actual influence from the amount of desired influence.[20] The third set of items asked board members to indicate which person or groups they were likely to agree with on a given issue. These responses were used to construct agreement scores with each interest group for each category of issues. In addition to the questions on decision making, the survey contained a series of questions regarding the local teachers union. Of specific interest are a set of items which asked respondents to indicate whether the local union should become more or less involved in a number of different areas such as compensation, class size, evaluation, non-teaching duties, etc.[21] A single item requiring board members to rate the union's power relative to the administration was also included in the analysis.

In regards to the fulfillment of expectations, three sets of items were used as a rough indicator of this factor. The first required school board members to rate their perception of the value of their services to the school district in their eyes, in the eyes of the superintendent, and in the eyes of the public. All three were recorded on a scale of 1 (not at all valuable) to 5 (very valuable). The same scale was used in the second item which asked respondents how valuable the rewards received from their position as board member are to them. The assumption being made is that the more valuable a member's services and rewards, the greater the probability that one's expectations have been met. The third set of questions asked responsdents to indicate how satisfied they were with their position as board members.[22] Insofar as the fulfillment of expectations is generally realted to experience, three measures of

experience (time in district, tenure on board, and number of times elected) were also included in this stage of the analysis.

Having created a rather substantial collection of independent variables which capture the essence of the political context in which board members operate, we proceeded to correlate each of the independent variables with the dependent variable. Thirty-two variables emerged as significant and were carried to the second stage of the analysis.[23]

STAGE 2: In stage two of our analysis, the variables which emerged as significant from the first stage were subjected to a principal factors analysis with varimax rotation. It was anticipated that the factor analysis would identify the most common patterns of political activity school board members engage in. In a sense, such patterns could be taken as characterizations of types of school board members. By using the factor results to create scales on which to score each respondent, we would then have ratings of each board member's political activity.

Eleven factors emerged from the factor analysis. Items with factor loadings of .10 or higher were then used to create true factor scales for each of the eleven factors.[24] These scales then became the independent variables for use in the final stage of our analysis.

STAGE 3: In the final stage of our analysis, the eleven patterns of political activity identified by the factor analysis were regressed against the dependent variable of school board turnover. Seven of the eleven factors emerged as significant predictors of school board turnover.

Results and Discussion

If we accept the argument that the factor scales are indicative of patterns of political activity, then the results of the regression performed in stage 3 of the analysis can be seen as identifying those

patterns which will lead a board member not to run again and those patterns which are likely to result in a decision to run again. Of the seven patterns which emerged as significant, three predict to not running and four predict to deciding to run again. Table 1 summarizes each set of factors and the variables which comprise each.

The first factor, administrative deprivation, predicts to board turnover (beta = -.14). The three items which contribute to this factor - administrative deprivation over monetary issues, administrative deprivation over negotiations, and administrative deprivation over special programs/ community relations - all deal with the administration not having the influence that board members believe they should have. This suggests that frustration with the administration's ability to get things done is one reason for deciding to leave the school board.

The second factor contains only one item - length of time on the board. Not surprisingly, the longer someone is on the board, the less likely s/he is to run again (beta = -.22). What is interesting about this result is the fact that it is opposite of almost all of the previous research on turnover which shows that tenure predicts negatively to turnover.[25] This reinforces the argument made earlier regarding the unique position of the school board member and the necessity of taking this uniqueness into account when investigating turnover.[26]

The final factor predisposing a board member not to run again is agreement with the current board (factor 3, beta = -.12). Particularly important are agreement with the current board's handling of negotiations, control issues, daily labor relations, and district issues. The general attitude implied is one of "the rest of the board has things in hand, so I can leave."

Table 1: Predictors of School Board Turnover

Factor Name	Variables (Factor loading)	Predicts To	Beta
1. Administrative Deprivation	a. Admin. Deprived Monetary Issues (.33) b. Admin. Deprived Negotiations (.54) c. Admin. Deprived Special Programs/ Community Relations (.17)	Not running	-.14***
2. Tenure on Board	a. Length of Time on Board (.94)	Not Running	-.22***
3. Agree with Current Board	a. Agree Board on Negotiations (.19) b. Agree Board on Control (.18) c. Agree Board on Daily Labor Relations (.40) d. Agree Board on District Issues (.30)	Not Running	-.12**
4. Union Involvement	a. More Union Involvement Compensation (.11) b. More Union Involvement Class Size (.12) c. More Union Involvement Non-Teaching Duties (.20) d. More Union Involvement Leaves (.20) e. More Union Involvement Tuition (.15) f. More Union Involvement Evaluation (.24) g. More Union Involvement Discipline (.16) h. More Union Involvement Job Say (.13)	Running	.19***
5. Conflict on Authority Over Control Issues	a. Teachers' Authority Over Control Issues (.22) b. Administration's Authority Over Control Issues (-.60)	Running	.13**
6. Self Value	a. Length Time on Board (.15) b. # Times Won Election (-.16) c. Superintendent's View of Value (.22) d. Value of Rewards (.21) e. Socialized By Administrative Assistants (-.38) f. Demands By Businessmen (-.12) g. Board Authority Over Classroom Issues (-.13)	Running	.14**
7. ?	a. Value Rewards (.14) b. Agree Bd. on Control Issues (-.20) c. Agree Board on Daily Labor Relations (.12) d. Union Involvement in Leaves (-.15) e. Union Involvement in Discipline (.10) f. Union Involvement in Keeping Members Informed (.48) g. Admin. Deprived Monetary Issues (.11) h. Admin. Deprived Special Programs/Community Relations (-.16)	Running	.11**

*** $p \leq .01$
** $p \leq .05$

Turning to factors which predict to a board member's deciding to run again, the results indicate that being a pro-union candidate, i.e., desiring more union involvement in a variety of areas (compensation, class size, non-teaching duties, leaves, tuition reimbursement, evaluation, discipline, and job say), predicts to attempting to remain in office (factor 4, beta = .19). This result highlights the role of interest groups and coalitions in school district politics, while also sensitizing one to the presence of single issue candidates on the school board.

In contrast to the board member who favors more union involvement and therefore decides to run again, there is the board member who feels that the teachers have usurped authority over control issues which should be in the hands of the administration. This conflict regarding authority over control issues is sufficient to make some board members decide to run for another term of office (factor 5, beta = .13).

A pro-administration attitude is also apparent in factor six. The items included in this factor reveal a pattern of activity which includes having some degree of tenure on the board (yet with few election victories), socialization by members of the administration, few demands from the community, a desire to increase the board's authority over classroom issues, a belief that the superintendent values your services to the district, and feeling that the rewards of serving on the board are very important. Board members who engage in this pattern of activity are likely to run again for office (beta = .14).

The final factor predicting to a decision to run for office again includes a number of items which express both agreement and discontent with different groups in the school district. To illustrate, the factor suggests a pattern of activity which involves disagreement with the way the current board handles control issues, but agreement with the board's

handling of daily labor relations; a desire for the union to be less involved in leaves, but more involved in both discipline and keeping their members informed; and a belief that the administration does not have sufficient influence over monetary issues, but too much influence over special programs/ community relations. Furthering this set of beliefs provides the board member with very important rewards. While uncertain what to call this pattern of activity, its presence does predict to seeking another term on the school board (factor 7, beta = .11).

Despite the relatively low loadings of several items in the seven factors and the significant but low betas, we firmly believe that the analysis and results presented are of importance as an exploratory study of school board turnover. The patterns of activity identified by the factors have a high/of face validity, as well as/intuitive appeal. When the results have been presented to practitioners, they have been greeted with nods of recognition. Thus although the results need to be replicated and expanded upon, they appear to be heading in a direction which holds promise for both theory and practice.

This direction centers around a political analysis of schools and school districts as organizations. The results suggest that it is the specific issues confronting the school district and the alignment of interest groups around these issues that has a major impact on the identity developed by a school board member and his/her subsequent decision whether or not to seek another term in office. As noted earlier, the study of issues, interest groups, and coalitions lies at the heart of a political analysis.

The identification of distinct patterns of political activity among board members also highlights the possible complexity of school district

politics. Any given school board is likely to contain several different types of board members, each with their own concern over specific issues and tendency to align with specific interest groups. It is the relative degree of factionalization on the board and the ability of members to negotiate agreements (often with the aid of the superintendent) that constitutes the process of school board politics.

Obviously, then, the make-up of the school board can have a significant effect on the amount of turmoil or quiescence a school district exhibits. Further, the future state of the district depends, in part, on the turnover of current members of the school board. Assuming that school administrators generally prefer a quiet board to a turbulent board, knowing which board members are likely to stay or leave can help them prepare for potential futures. The bottom line is that which member decides to leave and which member chooses to run again may have a substantially different affect on the district. Turnover may prove to be functional or dysfunctional for the district.[27] The results presented here may begin to sensitize us to the various possibilities.

Conclusion

School board turnover is almost an annual event in most school districts, an event which may have a significant affect on the administration of the school district. Yet surprisingly little research has been done on the predictors of school board turnover. Although the voluminous literature on job turnover provides two approaches to the study of turnover, i.e., exchange/utility and expectation/experience models, the assumptions which have guided prior research using these models make their direct application to the study of board turnover problematic. Specifically, their focus on variables such as pay, promotion, alternative job opportunities, and job characteristics is inappropriate for the study of board turnover.

These models prove useful, however, when embedded in a perspective which accounts for the political context in which school board turnover occurs. This requires focusing on specific issues, the alignment of interest groups around these issues, and the relative success of these alignments in achieving board member's objectives. The results presented in this paper suggest that the patterns of political activity school board members adopt predict to their decision on whether or not to seek another term in office.

Our concern here has been to conduct an exploratory study of the politics of school board turnover. We believe that the results support the value of a political approach and deserve to be expanded upon in future research. While school board turnover may accentuate the political aspects of turnover, it seems likely that politics plays an important role in other types of turnover as well. Pay raises and promotional opportunities are often seen as part of a political game in organizations, and the smart administrator knows how to ride a specific issue to the top, and what groups to align with in the organization. Failure in organizational politics may lead to turnover, regardless of what position or type of organization one is concerned with.[28] Because of this, the preliminary step towards assessing the political context of school turnover presented here may prove valuable to the study of turnover in general.

Footnotes

1. This material is based on work supported by the National Institute of Education under Grant Number NIE G 78 0080, Dr. Samuel B. Bacharach, principal investigator. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute or the Department of Education.

2. See S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, "Critical Variables in the Formation and Maintenance of Consensus in School Districts," Educational Administration Quarterly, 1981, 17 (4), 74-97.

3. Recent reviews of the turnover literature include A. Bluedorn, "The Theories of Turnover: Causes, Effects, and Meaning," in S. Bacharach (ed), Research in The Sociology of Organizations. Vol. 1, Greenwich, Conn: JAI Press, 1982; W. Mobley, R. Griffeth, H. Hand, and B. Meglino, "Review and Conceptual Analysis of the Employee Turnover Process," Psychological Bulletin, 1979, 86, 493-522; and R. Steers and R. Mowday, "Employee Turnover and Post-Decision Accomodation Processes," in L. Cumming and B. Stow (eds), Research in Organizational Behavior, vol. 3. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1981.

4. The necessity of viewing school organizations as political systems is elaborated by S. Bacharach "Organizational and Political Dimensions for Research on School District Governance and Administration," in S. Bacharach (ed), Organizational Behavior in Schools and School Districts, New York: Praeger, 1981.

5. Conceptually, the study of turnover and the study of commitment deal with the same basic variables. Their similarity can be seen by considering the operationalizations ordinarily used as the dependent variable: in

turnover, the respondents intent to leave the organization is taken as a surrogate measure of turnover (see Bluedorn, op. cit); whereas in commitment, the respondent's intent to stay is used. Nor surprisingly, low commitment leads to turnover.

6. One of the first researchers to make this explicit was R. Steers, "Antecedants and Outcomes of Organizational Commitment", Administrative Science Quarterly, 1977, 22, 46-56. Both J. Stevens, J. Beyer and H. Trice, "Assessing Personal, Role, and Organizational Predictors of Managerial Commitment", Academy of Management Journal, 1978, 21, 380-396 and J. Morris and J. Sherman, "Generalizability of an Organizational Commitment Model", Academy of Management Journal, 24, 512-526, follow up on this line of argument.

7. Studies examining the impact of pay include: T. Martin, "A Contextual Model of Employee Turnover Intentions", Academy of Management Journal, 1979, 22, 313-324; W. Mobly et. al., op. cit.,; and J. Price and C. Mueller, "A Causal Model of Turnover for Nurses", Academy of Management Journal, 1981, 24, 543-565. Both the Martin and Mobly et. al. papers also look at the affect of promotional opportunities. Discussions of the importance of alternatives (and information on alternatives) can be found in: W. Mobly et. al., op. cit.,; R. Steers and R. Mowday, op. cit.; and A. Bluedorn, op. cit. Both J. Price and C. Mueller, op. cit., and J. Mitchell, "The Effect of Intentions, Tenure, Personal and Organizational Variables on Managerial Turnover", Academy of Management Journal, 1981, 24, 742-751 consider the importance of tenure in the study of turnover.

8. See J. Stevens, J. Beyer and H. Trice, op. cit., R. Steers, op. cit; J. Morris and J. Sherman, op. cit.; R. Steers and R. Mowday, op. cit.; A. Bluedorn, op. cit.; and H. Angle and J. Perry, "An Empirical Assessment of Organizational Commitment and Organizational Effectiveness,"

Administrative Science Quarterly, 1981, 26, 1-14.

9. The assumptions related to the role of job characteristics are adopted from the literature on job satisfaction, job motivation, and job re-design. J. Hackman and G. Oldham, Work Redesign. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1980, is a good illustration of this line of reasoning. In terms of the turnover and commitment research, J. Morris and J. Sherman, op. cit.; J. Price and C. Mueller, op. cit.; and R. Mowday and D. Spencer, "The Influence of Task and Personality Characteristics on Employee Turnover and Absenteeism Incidents," Academy of Management Journal, 24, 634-642, all provide evidence for the impact of job characteristics on turnover.

10. Indeed, preliminary analysis conducted in the early stages of the research reported here failed to show any significant correlations between job characteristics and board turnover.

11. See S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, "The Sources of Dissatisfaction in Educational Administration: A Role Specific Analysis", Educational Administration Quarterly, 1983, 18, for a discussion of the relation of job characteristics to role performance.

12. This list is adopted from S. Bacharach, op. cit; and S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, "Critical Variables in the Formation and Maintenance of Consensus in School Districts", op. cit.

13. Studies which view the board as a rubber stamp for the administration include: R. Callahan, Education and the Cult of Efficiency. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962; N. Kerr, "The School Board as an Agency of Legitimation", Sociology of Education, 1964, 38, 34-54; and L. Iannaccone and F. Lutz, Politics, Power, and Policy: The Governing of Local School Districts. Columbus: Charles Merril, 1970. H. Zeigler and K. Jennings, Governing American Schools. North Scituate, Mass: Duxbury Press, 1974 are an example of someone who recognizes the role of

political activity in securing the board's legitimation.

14. The notion of a liberal versus conservative vision is adopted from D. Mitchell, "Ideology and Public Policy-Making", Urban Education, 1974, 9 (1), 35-49; that of a curriculum versus finance vision from S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, "Critical Variables...," op. cit.

15. See Mobley et. al., op. cit., and A. Bluedorn, op. cit., for a discussion of the use of intent to leave as a measure of turnover.

16. See S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, ibid.

17. The questions are the same as those used in S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, "The Sources of Dissatisfaction...," op. cit.

18. For a discussion of coalition formation, see S. Bacharach and E. Lawler, Power and Politics in Organizations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.

19. In constructing measures from the decision-making questions, Superintendents, Administrative Assistants, and Principals were counted as administration, while PTA and parents were counted as community. Teachers and the school board were single roles in the survey items.

20. The construction of decisional deprivation measures is discussed in S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, "Organization and Expectations: Organizational Determinants of Union Membership Demands", in D. Lipsky (ed), Advances in Industrial and Labor Relations. Vol. 1, Greenwich, Conn: JAI Press, 1982.

21. See S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, ibid, for a discussion of this measure.

22. See S. Bacharach and S. Mitchell, "The Sources of Dissatisfaction in Educational Administration: A Role Specific Analysis," op. cit., for a discussion of this measure.

23. To our minds, the important part of the analysis lies in the final stage. In the interest of space, we will only present figures related to that

aspect of the analysis. Statistics for the other stages of the analysis are available from the authors.

24. By rue factor scale, we mean that each scale was constructed using the following formula: scale = (Factor loading 1 * (respondent score 1 - mean 1)/standard deviation 1) + (Factor loading 2 * (respondent score 2 - mean 2)/ standard deviation 2) + ... (Factor loading n * (respondent score n - mean n)/ standard deviation n)

25. For example, see J. Price and C. Mueller, op. cit.; and J. Mitchell, op. cit.

26. A similar call for the use of a situational specific approach to the study of turnover was made by R. Marsh and H. Mannari "Organizational Commitment and Turnover: A Prediction Study", Administrative Science Quarterly, 1977, 22, 57-75.

27. The dominant view in the literature on turnover has assumed that turnover is a negative phenomenon which carries implicit and explicit costs to the organization. More recently, this view has been questioned as researchers begin to consider the possible benefits of turnover to the organization. See A. Bluedorn, op. cit.; R. Steers and R. Mowday, op. cit.; G. Dreker "The Role of Performance in the Turnover Process", Academy of Management Journal, 1982, 25, 137-147; W. Mobley "Some Unanswered Questions in Turnover and Withdrawal Research", Adademy of Management Review, 1982, 7, 111-116; D. Dalton, W. Todor, and D. Krackhardt "Turnover Overstated: The Functional Taxonomy", Academy of Management Review, 1982, 7, 117-123; and D. Dalton and W. Todor "Turnover: A Lucrative Hard Dollar Phenomenon", Academy of Management Review, 1982, 7, 212-218.

28. Indeed, turnover may be seen as one tactic in a political process. See A. Hirschman Exit, Voice, and Loyalty, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1972.